

## Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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R 171605Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3140

S E C R E T ROME 13408

NODIS

EYES ONLY FOR SISCO FROM LODGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR LODGE'S CONVERSATIONS IN ROME

FOLLOWING IS A REPORT OF MY CONVERSATION WITH A HIGHLY EXPERT  
OBSERVER WHO IS CLOSE TO THE VATICAN AND WHOSE NAME I WILL TELL  
YOU WHEN NEXT WE TALK. HE SAYS:

1. THE COMMUNIST SUCCESS TO DATE IS BASICALLY DUE TO ONE  
UNDERLYING FACTOR, THE CRASS CORRUPTION AMONG THE CHRISTIAN  
DEMOCRATS. THIS IS WELL KNOWN AND PROVEN. IT MUST BE ADDED TO  
THE INCREASE IN KIDNAPPING AND CRIME GENERALLY AND TO THE PER-  
VASIVE INEFFICIENCY OF THE GOVERNMENT.
2. THIS CORRUPTION -- MORE THAN THE COMMUNISTS' POSITIVE  
ATTRACTIONS -- EXPLAINS THAT MANY POLICE OFFICERS HAVE RECENTLY  
VOTED COMMUNIST: THEY KNOW MUCH ABOUT CRIME AND COULD DO MUCH,  
BUT THEY ARE TIRED OF RISKING THEIR LIVES TO CATCH CRIMINALS  
WHOSE POLITICAL INFLUENCE IS SO GREAT THAT THEY CAN BRIBE  
JUDGES AND JAILERS.
3. IT ALSO EXPLAINS THE CONTACTS WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN MADE  
BETWEEN CERTAIN CARDINALS AND THE COMMUNISTS, EVIDENTLY GETTING  
READY FOR THE EVIL DAY. BEGIN COMMENT. BECAUSE OF THE DEPENDA-  
BILITY OF THE SOURCE I MENTION THESE CONTACTS EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE  
CONTRARY TO WHAT WAS TOLD ME BY BENILLI YESTERDAY -- AND NEMELLI

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IS THE POPE'S POLICY MAKER REGARDING VATICAN RELATIONS WITH ALL

ITALIAN POLITICIANS. END COMMENT.

4. FINALLY, IT EXPLAINS THE GROWING APPEAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH BY CONTRAST APPEARS AS SOMETHING INCORRUPT AND AS ABLE AND WILLING TO UPHOLD LAW AND ORDER. THUS COMMUNISM APPEALS TO THE MIDDLE-AGED AND CONSERVATIVES. AT THE SAME TIME IT APPEALS TO THE MASSES OF UNEMPLOYED YOUTH THROUGH A SOCIAL PROGRAM WHICH PROMISES THAT EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE DIFFERENT. UNDOUBTEDLY THE COMMUNIST PARTY HAS ADRIOT LEADERSHIP: THEY OVERLOOK NO CHANCE TO AVOID FRIGHTENING THE PUBLIC, RECENTLY SAYING THAT WHEN THEY WIN PUBLIC OFFICE THEY WILL NOT DO SO BY THEMSELVES BUT WILL MOVE INTO PLACES OF POWER WITH A NUMBER OF ALLIES FROM THE RANKS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS.

5. THERE IS TIME TO REMAKE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS -- IF THERE IS THE WILL, OF WHICH OF WHICH SO FAR THERE IS NO SIGN.

6. FOR THE UNITED STATES TO BE ACTIVE IN ALL OF THIS IS EXTREMELY DELICATE. THE MOST ATTRACTIVE IDEA IS THAT OF WINNING YOUNG ITALIANS OVER BY WELL THOUGHT OUT AND WELL MANAGED CULTURAL PROGRAMS, SUCH AS TRIPS TO AMERICA HAVING TO DO WITH ARTS, SCIENCES AND SPORTS.  
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